

Mansions under the Spell of the „Olden Times“. Country House Building in the English Style

József SISA

In the early 1840s unusual ripples disturbed the placid universe of neoclassical architecture in the western and northern fringes of historical Hungary: one after the other, country houses fitted with picturesque battlements, pointed windows and curious mouldings began to appear. Two of them, those at Rusovce (Oroszvár) and Veľké Uhrece (Nagyugróc), went up in the area of today's Slovakia, the third one at Vép in Vas County of modern Hungary. Apart from a predilection for a style reminiscent of Windsor Castle, their builders shared some other interests, which, in one way or another, bound them to England. It is also remarkable that none of the country houses was designed by a Hungarian architect, or, for that matter, by an English one, but all three were built by Austrian designers. The specific features of their architecture and the circumstances under which they were built can be best understood in a context that encompasses not only England and historical Hungary, but also wider areas of the central European region.

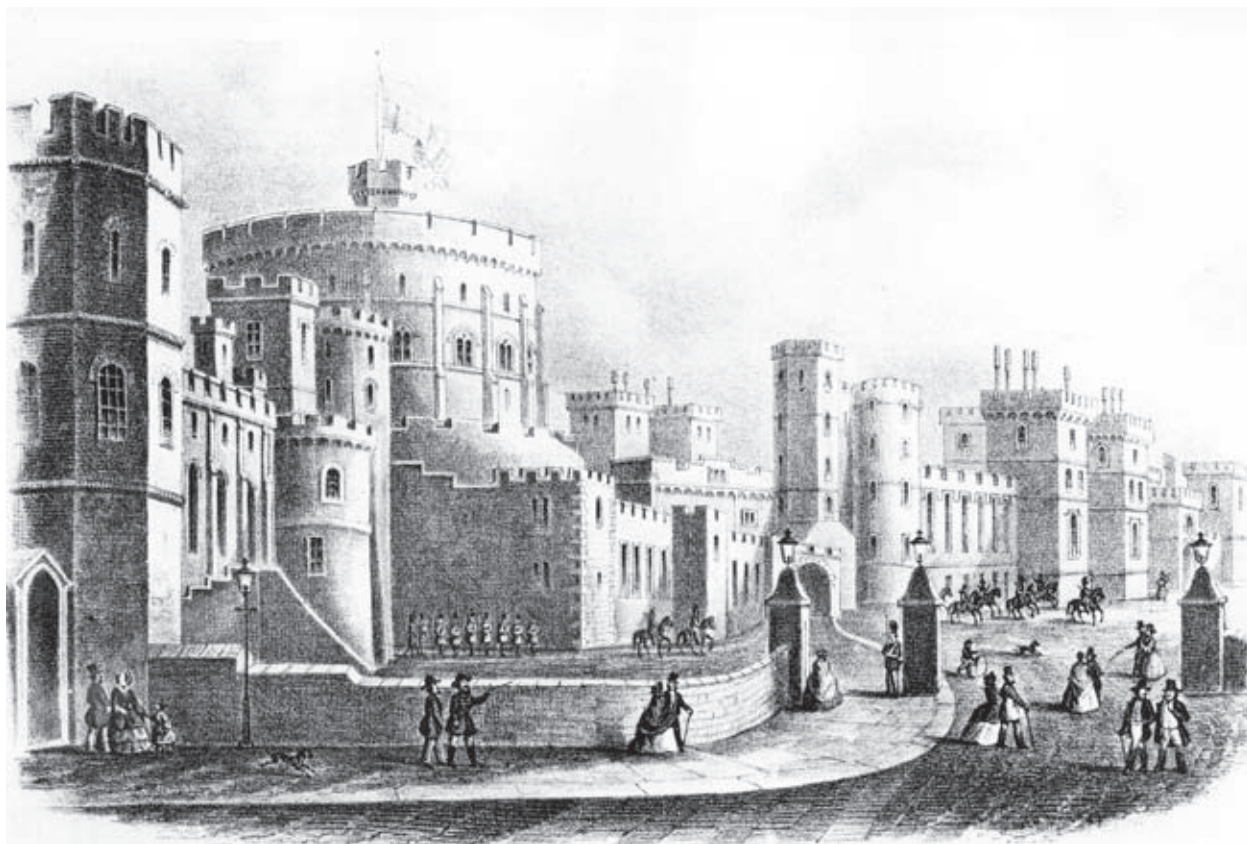
England was the fountain-head of the Gothic Revival movement. A trend intertwined with it, the castle revival, also evoked the Gothic past, with specific features such as machicolations sitting on brackets, often displayed on circular or polygonal towers.¹ Garden follies and fake castles in this mode proliferated in Britain in the 18th century. Neo-

Gothic and castellated structures sometimes included prominent drip-stones, often square and broken, borrowed from late-Mediaeval Tudor architecture. The underlying idea behind this was the playful and the Picturesque, rather than the accurate and the historical. The castellated and the Neo-Tudor modes reached their climax in England in the period of the Regency, more notably between c. 1810 and 1830. Spectacular buildings by John Nash (Caern Castle, Cornwall, c. 1808), Anthony Salvin (Mamhead, Devon, 1828 – 1838) and William Wilkins (Tregothan, Cornwall, 1816 – 1818; Dalmeny House, 1814 – 1817) attest to this, the most influential, indeed seminal, building of this kind being Windsor Castle [Fig. 1] as remodelled by Jeffry Wyattville (1824 – 1840). Another main source for the “castle” style, and more broadly the picturesque country house in the Regency period was Walter Scott's house at Abbotsford (built in two campaigns 1817 – 1819 and 1822 – 1825). In many respects this was the beginning of a more explicitly “Scottish Baronial” style, but it led the way for informal, castellated country houses, even anticipating Windsor.² In addition, its link to the Romantic associations of history, thanks to Walter Scott's novels, increased awareness of the medieval world. Also pattern books propagating this kind of architecture came out in great numbers. They included Robert Lugar's *Plans and Views of Buildings*,

¹ GIROUARD, M.: The castle revival in English architecture. In: WAGNER-RIEGER, R. – KRAUSE, W. (eds.): *Historismus und Schlossbau*. München 1975, pp. 83-86; WATKIN, D.: *Regency. A Guide and a Gazetteer*. London etc. 1982; WATKIN, D.: *The English Vision. The Picturesque in Architecture, Landscape and Garden Design*. London 1982; ALEXANDER, M.: *Medieval-*

ism. The Middle Ages in Modern England. New Haven – London 2007.

² DAITCHES, D.: *Sir Walter Scott and His World*. London 1971; WAINWRIGHT, C.: *The Romantic Interior: The English Collector at Home 1750 – 1850*. New Haven – London 1989.



1. Jeffry Wyattville: Windsor Castle, 1824 – 1840. Repr.: *Az Ország Tükré*, 1862, No. 14, p. 213.

Executed in England and Scotland in the Castellated and Other Styles (London 1823) and Thomas F. Hunt's *Exemplars of Tudor Architecture Adapted to Modern Habitations* (London 1830), but elevations in the same style appeared also in J. C. Loudon's highly important *Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm, and Villa Architecture and Furniture* (London 1833). An equally influential work was Joseph Nash's *Mansions of England in the Olden Times* (London 1838 – 1849).³ These and similar publications proved to be an effective tool in the dissemination of the English taste.

Interest in things English was already on the rise in the 18th century due to the country's rise to prominence in European politics and culture. Bouts of "Anglomania" swept over the Continent, which manifested itself in various aspects of life and art

from dress (especially male) to horse racing and garden design. Even proud countries with a strong sense of identity and deep-rooted indigenous culture such as France succumbed. As the 19th century wore on, renewed interest in the island-nation persisted, despite the artificial interval of the Napoleonic wars. Hungary, where in the 1830s and 1840s not only aristocrats but also a sizable number of young intellectuals were able, and eager, to travel to England, followed suit.⁴

Architecture was one of the fields where English models found imitators. It would be untrue to say that English-inspired styles set the tone on the Continent, but they certainly represented a welcome addition to the increasingly colourful world of architectural creation. Perhaps the castellated and the

³ WRIGHTSON, P.: The English Picturesque: Villa and Cottage, 1760 – 1860. In: *Indianapolis Museum of Art Bulletin*, 1, 1973, No. 3 (new series).

⁴ ORSZÁGH, L.: "Anglomania" in Hungary, 1780 – 1900. In: *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, 22, 1981, No. 82, pp. 168-179.

Neo-Tudor modes have been perceived as the most “English” as revival styles go. Also in the German states, with which Hungary maintained traditionally strong cultural ties, English forms found application.⁵ In Munich even important buildings in the heart of the city such as the Wittelsbacher Palace, i.e. Crown Prince Maximilian’s residence (1840 – 1848), were built as castellated structures.⁶ Prussia’s leading architect in the age of neoclassicism, Karl Friedrich Schinkel, too, built occasionally along English lines. His Schloss Babelsberg (1832 – 1835), again a structure for a youthful Crown Prince, Wilhelm, represented an embodiment of the contemporary concept of Englishness.⁷ It was particularly in the field of country house buildings that the Neo-Gothic, castellated, the Neo-Tudor, and soon the cottage style, came to be considered as the most adequate forms of architectural expression.

Starting from the late 1830s, a string of English-inspired country houses were erected in the western provinces of the Habsburg Empire. Schloss Anif (H. Schönauer, 1838 – 1848), Schloss Gafenegg (L. Ernst, 1843 – 1864), Schloss Merkenstein (J. Romano and A. Schwendenwein, 1843 – 1844) in the “Austrian” provinces, Schloss Hrádek (E. B. Lamb, 1839 – 1857), Schloss Frauenberg/Hluboká (F. Beer, 1841 – 1857), Schloss Eisgrub/Lednice (G. Wingemüller, 1841 – 1857) in the Czech provinces were the most outstanding of these structures.⁸ It is no accident that the architects of some of the above-mentioned houses were invited to produce similar structures in the eastern half of the Empire.

Historical Hungary constituted part of the Habsburg Empire, and naturally the two halves of

the monarchy, in spite of their different constitutional make-up, lived in a political, economic and cultural symbiosis. Vienna, the capital of the Empire and the cultural centre where aristocrats from all the Habsburg provinces felt at home, exerted far-reaching influences. It would be wrong, though, to ignore local ideas and developments, which were present also in the area of country house building.⁹ First of all the role of visits to England, referred to above, cannot be overestimated. Of the many travellers Count István Széchenyi, the sharp-eyed and innovative aristocrat, whose driving ambition was to improve the lot of his country not least by encouraging the construction of good dwellings and thereby provide further incentive to patriotism, paid special attention to English country house building practices. In the 1830s he even wrote a book, in fact a long-winded and idiosyncratic treatise, on the subject. Though the book was published only posthumously, he had discussed in person the related issues, mostly technical matters concerning comfort, with his peers. Other travellers were more susceptible to the romantic aspects of architecture. Upon catching sight of Windsor Castle, Bertalan Szemere enthused: “*Windsor, my friend, is an especially beautiful knights’ castle... There is no symmetry between its parts and thus the whole figure is all the more fabulous, savage, fantastic. And the round tower, which rises at the centre of the castle from a second mound-like top, is royally magnificent, like a column surmounted by a crown, and on its extremity the flag of Britain is fluttering, attached to a pole.*”¹⁰

Some noblemen resorted to English pattern-books when they built their homes. József Eötvös described a typical Anglomaniac, not without a touch

⁵ MUTHESIUS, S.: *Das englische Vorbild*. München 1974.

⁶ NERDINGER, W. (ed.): *Romantik und Restauration. Architektur in Bayern zur Zeit Ludwigs I. 1825 – 1848*. München 1987, pp. 228-233.

⁷ *Karl Friedrich Schinkel 1781 – 1841*. [Exhib. Cat.] Berlin : Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 1982, pp. 216-218.

⁸ KOTRBA, V.: Die Anfänge der Neugotik in den böhmischen Ländern. In: *Alte und Moderne Kunst*, 10, 1965, No. 81; EGGER, K.: Der sogenannte ‘Historismus’ und die romantische Schlösser in Österreich. In: WAGNER-RIEGER – KRAUSE 1975 (see in note 1), pp. 55-82; WINDISCH-GRÄTZ, F.: Schloss Hrádek in Böhmen. In: *Ibidem*, pp. 143-150.

⁹ SISA, J.: The ‘English Garden’ and the Comfortable House. British Influences in Nineteenth-Century Hungary. In: ERNYEY, G.: *Britain and Hungary. Contacts in Architecture and Design During the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century*. Budapest 1999, pp. 71-94; SISA, J.: *Kastélyépítészet és kastélykultúra Magyarországon – A historizmus kora* [Country House-Building and Country House Culture in Hungary – The Age of Historicism]. Budapest 2007.

¹⁰ *Utazás külföldön. Válogatás Szemere Bertalan nyugat-európai útnaplójából* [Travelling abroad. Excerpts from Bertalan Szemere’s West European travel diary]. Budapest 1983 (1st ed. 1840), pp. 315-316.

of irony, in his novel *Village Notary* (1845): “When Mr. James Bántornyí returned from England, he rebuilt the family mansion on a plan which was suggested by Loudon’s Encyclopaedia of Cottage Architecture. The new building, which did so much honour to his taste, was not above one story high; but one of the old towers, which communicated with the new house, was built higher and... provided with a wooden staircase. A verandah was constructed on that side of the house which fronted the garden, and an antechamber and a billiard-room were built in the yard.”¹¹ Even as late as the 1870s some English books were still in use. Count Ferenc Nádasdy, for instance, drew on Nash’s *Mansions of England in the Olden Times* when he built a new ancestral centre at Nádasdladány. Such aids were definitely needed since most architects had no first-hand experience of English architecture, let alone British training. The new taste quite often arrived through the patron’s mediation and at his express wish.

Now let’s turn our attention again to the three country houses mentioned at the very beginning of this article, the first architectural achievements of their kind. (Though not the very first manifestations of Gothicism, which go back to the late 18th century.¹²) The most sumptuous of them, Rusovce (1841 – 1844) [Figs. 2-3], was built for Count Emanuel Zichy-Ferraris, and designed by Franz Beer, Prince Schwarzenberg’s court architect and the designer of Schloss Frauenberg/Hluboká.¹³ The guests who appeared at the ceremonial laying of the corner stone at Rusovce included Prince Schwarzenberg himself (as well as his architect), Chancellor Metternich, the *de facto* ruler of the Habsburg Empire and Zichy-Ferraris’ brother-in-law, Robert Gordon, the English ambassador to Vienna, and another Englishmen by the name of Lord Brabayon. The presence of the distinguished guests from England was probably due to the fact that the patron’s wife was an Englishwoman, Charlotte Strachan, daughter of a high-ranking family. Contemporary sources



2. Franz Beer: Zichy-Ferraris Country House, Rusovce, 1841 – 1844. Repro: Steel-engraving by Ludwig Rohbock.



3. Franz Beer: Zichy-Ferraris Country House, Rusovce, 1841 – 1844, view of interior. Photo: Pamiatkový úrad Slovenskej republiky, Bratislava.

¹¹ EÖTVÖS, J.: *Village Notary: a Romance of Hungarian Life*. Vol. 1. Trans. O. WENCKSTERN. London 1850, p. 155. (Original Hungarian edition: EÖTVÖS, J.: *A falu jegyzője*. Pest 1845.)

¹² KOMÁRIK, D.: A korai gótizálás Magyarországon [Early Gothicism in Hungary]. In: ZÁDOR, A. – SZABOLCS, H. (eds.): *Művészet és felvilágosodás*. Budapest 1978, pp. 209-300.

¹³ KOMÁRIK, D.: A romantikus kastélyépítészet kezdetei Magyarországon [The Beginnings of Romantic Country House Building in Hungary]. In: *Építés-Építészettudomány*, 7, 1975, No. 3-4, pp. 431-451; POHANIČOVÁ, J.: Romantické prestavby šľachtických sídiel. Rusovce, Veľké Uherce a Bojnice [Romantic Adaptations of Country Houses. Rusovce, Veľké Uherce a Bojnice]. In: *Pamiatky a múzeá*, 54, 2005, No. 2, pp. 46-53.



4. Alois Pichl: Keglevich Country House, Velké Uherce, 1845 – 1850. Repro: Steel-engraving by Ludwig Robboc.

claim that the house owed its English appearance to Count Zichy-Ferraris' desire to gratify his wife with a structure reminiscent of her country. And probably even the money needed for its construction came from English sources, notably Charlotte Strachan's unusually generous dowry.

Velké Uherce (1844 – 1850) [Figs. 4-5], Count János Keglevich's country house followed immediately upon Rusovce, and owed it more than just an initial impulse.¹⁴ In fact Keglevich knew Rusovce quite well and in some ways modelled his house upon it. He sent his architect, the Viennese Alois Pichl, to Rusovce to see the house there, copy some of its details, and even have a good look at its plans. Yet Keglevich had his own sources from England. His architect used an "English copper engraving" when it came to the design of the wooden prospect tower on one of the bastions, and his library contained J. Britton and E. W. Brayley's 25-volume *Beauties of England and Wales* (London 1801 – 1818).¹⁵ A journey to France and Britain in 1846 – 1847 (in his diary he noted a visit to the Walter Scott Monument in



5. Alois Pichl: Keglevich Country House, Velké Uherce, 1845 – 1850, view of the library. Photo: J. Sisa.

Edinburgh) quite surely provided further justification for the style he chose for Velké Uherce.

The third house, at Vép (1867 – 1847), was also designed by a Viennese, Johann Romano.¹⁶ His patron, Count Ferenc Erdődy, was equally well-travelled, and his library was richly furnished with Hungarian and English books. A visitor also noticed the albums containing the owner's water-colour sketches made in the countries he had visited, among others England, Scotland and Ireland. Erdődy continued to maintain

¹⁴ JANKOVIČ, V.: K dejinám kaštieľa vo Veľkých Uherciach [To the History of the Country House in Velké Uherce]. In: *Vlastivedný časopis*, 22, 1973, No. 2, pp. 70-75; SISA, J.: Alois Pichl in Ungarn. Die Tätigkeit eines Wiener Architekten in Ungarn während der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts. In: *Acta Historiae Artium*, 28, 1982, No. 1-2, pp. 98-107.

¹⁵ SISA, J.: Zámocké knižnice v Topoľčiankach a vo Veľkých Uherciach z hľadiska dejín umenia a knihovedy [Castle

Libraries in Topoľčianky and Velké Uherce from an Art Historical Viewpoint]. In: *Zborník o problémoch a dejinách knižnej kultúry*. Martin : Slovenská národná knižnica, 2006, pp. 221-225.

¹⁶ SISA, J.: A vépi volt Erdődy-kastély Vas megyében [The Former Erdődy Country House at Vép in Vas County]. In: *Műemlékvédelem*, 21, 1977, No. 3, pp. 170-172.

ties with Britain after the initial construction of his house; in 1868 an Edinburgh engineer by the name of David Lowe sent him plans for a conservatory.

As we have seen, the three buildings under survey were products of an active personal interest in England; still all three came from the drawing boards of Austrian architects. Ultimately the interaction of a wider international context and a narrower central European background shaped their forms. At the same time their architecture, however convincing and consistent, was not much more than skin-deep. The three country houses were originally constructed at earlier times, and the castellated–Neo-Gothic remodelling affected hardly anything more than their facades. The U-shaped plan of Rusovce goes back to the 18th century, which was not changed by the 19th century additions; yet the battlements, Gothic arches and polygonal excretions quite successfully mask the building's original, formal character. It is remarkable, though, that no attempt was made at asymmetry, for instance with the addition of a prominent tower on one side, which would have given the house an even more romantic appearance. The 19th-century architect was, or had to be, content with a two-tier tower on top of the central pavilion. This tower is a rather small structure and lacks any prominence; it is in actual fact a somewhat timid and half-hearted essay. Veľké Uherce is in many ways similar. Here the original structure was mediaeval, which, with its round tower at each corner, lent itself naturally to Neo-Gothic recreation. But when the architect suggested raising the height of one of them by 10 metres, his client, who was admittedly a friend of symmetry, failed to understand the significance of the idea. (Instead, a small wooden prospect tower was put on one of the towers at the rear, later to be removed.) Besides the crenellated battlements there was another feature intended to give the building a specifically English look: a trapezium-shaped central pavilion attached to the principal façade in imitation of a large bay-window. The country house at Vép had originally an immense tower, whose stereometry easily and inherently adapted itself to 19th-century use. As a consequence, it turned out to be a structure quite in line with the visual drama of the mock castles of the English Regency period. (Unfortunately the features of the 1846 – 1847 remodelling were wantonly removed in the 20th century.)

Lavish woodwork ensures that the rooms inside the houses have an equally Gothic character. In Rusovce the staircase, due to its considerable size and prominent position anticipating the ubiquitous staircase-cum-halls of later mansions, has a definitely English air. Its wooden railing imitates mediaeval tracery, its ceiling, though flat, boasts a playful display of Gothic “ribs”. The woodwork and decoration reaches its climax on the main floor. Intricate panelling, carefully crafted wooden ceilings complete with consoles and pendants, tall doors in pointed arches create an enchanted atmosphere. The main hall boasts a cycle of paintings attached to the wall, which depict scenes from a chivalric legend. Veľké Uherce is not so grand, but its details are equally opulent and delicate. (It was built, in fact, for the patron's young, second wife.) Local as well as Viennese carpenters and cabinetmakers toiled on the walls and ceilings to give them the splendour demanded by the patrons. Some of the details, such as the pendants, were copied from Rusovce. Special care was taken to ornament the fire-places and the “Gothic-Rococo” mirrors attached to them. What makes Veľké Uherce different from Rusovce is the somewhat mixed style of the woodwork. Keglevich and his wife insisted on including Renaissance details such as the ceilings of the Châteaux of Fontainebleau and Blois, probably as a reminder of a recent journey. Both houses have stained-glass windows, too, Rusovce more of the mediaeval type with strong, primary colours, Veľké Uherce more of the figurative design. Though it is not the task of the present article to discuss garden design, it should be noted that both houses were surrounded by lovely landscape parks, or “English gardens”, as can be seen in contemporary pictures.

The country houses at Rusovce and Veľké Uherce represented an early interest in a special kind of English-inspired Neo-Gothic and belonged to a small group of pioneering structures in the Central European region. Following in their footsteps, orientation to England as a major trend continued in country house building for a few decades. Some of the finest examples deserve more than a passing glance.

The country house Parchovany (Parnó) [Figs. 6-7] is today a mystery. The exact date and the architect's name are unknown, and the building does not exist any more. It was built in the second half of the 1850s by Count Manó Andrassy, on the



6. Country House, Parchovany, late 1850s. Repro: *Szálon Újság*, 8, 1903, No. 10, p. 6.

remains of a much earlier structure.¹⁷ The anonymous architect made good use of its irregular walls creating an approximately L-shaped plan for the new house, whose apparently haphazard masses included a battlemented bastion, a box-like winter garden, two towers of different shapes, and open arcades (later glazed) composed of Venetian-type Gothic arches. Besides the highly informal massing of its picturesque piles, just this touch of Venetian art lent the structure an English air. In this context one cannot ignore John Ruskin's recently published *Stones of Venice* (London 1851 – 1853), whose far-reaching influence may have been responsible for Parchovany's arcades. It is interesting to note that the Calvinist Church of Lučenec (Losonc) of a somewhat earlier date (1852 – 1854) also had Gothic arcades reminiscent of Venetian palace architecture. Its designer was János Wagner of Pest, who was

not the only architect in that city with a penchant for Venice. Ferenc Wieser, who had visited England and married an Englishwoman, designed the peculiar Pichler House (1853 – 1857) beyond doubt under Ruskin's spell. Yet architects of the Habsburg Empire did not necessarily have to resort to the famed English author for this sort of inspiration. Venice at the time belonged to the Empire and was within easy reach for interested architects. It is well-known from Frigyes Feszl's work and travel sketches how intense that interest could be and how easily it was to be satisfied.¹⁸ As for Parchovany, the interior had also a touch of Venice, i.e. the intricately rich pattern of the drawing room's ceiling.

A variety of stylistic characteristics bring the country house at Galanta (Galánta, c. 1860) [Fig. 8], too, into the English orbit.¹⁹ It was the residence of Count József Esterházy, who had it remodelled

¹⁷ KOMÁRIK, D.: A parnói Andrássy-kastély [The Andrássy Country House at Párnó/Parchovany]. In: *Magyar Műemlékvédelem. A Műemléki Tudományos Intézet Közleményei XIII*. Budapest 2006, pp. 231-254.

¹⁸ KOMÁRIK, D.: *Feszl Frigyes (1821 – 1884)*. Budapest 1993; KOMÁRIK, D.: A Note on Frigyes Feszl's Search for a Hungarian National Style. In: *Centropa*, 2, 2002, No. 2, pp. 177-181.

¹⁹ LUKÁČOVÁ, E.: Vývin architektúry na Slovensku v rokoch 1848 – 1890 [History of Architecture in Slovakia from 1848 to 1890]. In: *Arx*, 1972 – 1974, No. 1-6, pp. 116, 120; KOMÁRIK, D.: A gótizáló romantika építészete Magyarországon [The Architecture of Gothicizing Romanticism in Hungary]. In: *Építés-Építészettudomány*, 14, 1982, No. 3-4, pp. 310-311.



7. *Country House, Parchovány, late 1850s, verandah with arcades. Repro: BOROV-SZKY, S. (ed.): Zemplén vármegye és Sátoraljaiújfehely. Budapest [1905], p. 97.s*

and expanded from designs by the Pest architect Antal Wéber. There is more than a passing resemblance between this building's immense, top-heavy tower and some of the castellated structures discussed above. Its massive pillars at the four corners crowned with oversize crenellations lend it a vaguely military appearance. The tower's dense fenestration and plastic treatment evoke again Venice. Beside its visual qualities the tower at Galánta had an additional meaning. The Esterházy family's original title of nobility comes from this place ("Esterházy de Galánta"), and Count József Esterházy, the owner of the country house at the time of its remodelling, held the position of "senior familiae". It is difficult to imagine that he did not take into account the iconological significance of the tower as a symbol of power and evocation of ancestry.²⁰ Attached to the tower was a massive bay window. Some of the same features appear on Prince Károly Arenberg's country house at Ivanka pri Dunaji (Pozsonyivánka, c. 1870) [Fig. 9] without the impressive drama of Galánta. Houses of the lesser nobility could not entirely escape the fashion for castellation either, as structures such as the small country house at Čerenčany (Cserencsény, c. 1860) attest.

In the 1850s the cottage style, another trend with English connotations, arrived on the scene.

Large gables, plain walls, bay-windows coupled with asymmetry and informal massing exerted an irresistible appeal to many a patron. Some of the finest examples can be found in western Hungary, and wherever the architect is known or suspected, he is Viennese, providing a further proof of central European mediation. It is not always easy to separate the castellated from the cottage styles since their architectural devices could easily mix even within a single structure.

Country houses were the primary carriers of English architectural inspiration between 1840 and 1870. Yet some of the typical features found their way to other building types as well, without gaining effective prominence. Occasionally dwelling-houses in towns echoed forms familiar from country houses. Structures with completely modern functions, such as railway stations, could assume the appearance of picturesque, English-style cottages with a random touch of the castellated. A case in point is the stations of the Railway of the Upper Tisza Region, built between 1857 and 1860, probably from designs by the Austrian-owned company's

²⁰ MOJZER, M.: Torony, kupola, kolonnád [Tower, Dome, Colonnade]. In: *Művészettörténeti Füzetek 1*. Budapest 1971.



8. Antal Wéber: Esterházy Country House, Galanta, c. 1860. Repro: Picture postcard.



9. Arenberg Country House, Ivanka pri Dunaji, c. 1870. Photo: J. Sisa.

architects.²¹ One of the main stations of this type once stood in Košice (Kassa). Features of castellation were employed as a matter of course on structures that had military connotations, such as prisons and barracks. A spectacular building of this type can be seen in Komárno (Komárom), the so-called Officers' Pavilion (1858 – 1863) [Fig. 10], which was not even a “military” structure in the proper sense of the word, yet which had to exude an air of military authority.²² Otherwise the architecture here is not Neo-Gothic but Rundbogenstil. A much later example is the barracks in Nitra (Nyitra), built probably at the end of the

19th century. Massive pillars with elaborate crenellations would also appear on totally non-military, civilian buildings for purely decorative purposes; such features are present even on the Vigadó Building (Assembly rooms and concert hall, 1859 – 1864) in Budapest, Frigyes Feszl's famous romantic achievement.

After 1870 things began to change: English would be gradually replaced by French, and Neo-Gothic by the Neo-Renaissance. Surely a new social set-up of patrons was at least partly responsible for that. Nouveaux-riches may have found English Gothic too “feudal”, while the Renaissance had the lure of

²¹ KUBINSZKY, M.: Romantikus magyar vasúti épületek [Hungarian Romantic Railway Buildings]. In: *Műemlékvédelem*, 3, 1959, No. 3, pp. 149-158.

²² KOMÁRIK, D.: A “félköríves” romantika építésze Magyarországon [The Architecture of Rundbogenstil Romanticism in Hungary]. In: *Építés-Építészettudomány*, 16, 1984, No. 1-2, pp. 161-165.



10. Officers' Pavilion, Komárno, 1858 – 1863. Photo: J. Sisa.

a style that could be associated with the notions of the freedom of the individual and rational thinking. Yet while in the cities the stylistic change was abrupt, in country house building it occurred in the form of a protracted transition, the Neo-Renaissance never gaining absolute predominance. Besides, on account of its informality and flexibility, the French Renaissance accommodated better to country houses than the more disciplined Italian Renaissance preferred in cities. The country house at Komjatice (Komját, 1870 – 1873), which was a landmark structure of its kind until its destruction after World War II, exemplifies the new developments. As the home of Sámuel Wodianer, a second-generation nobleman

of middle-class origin, it flaunted a donjon and a French château style.

With the advent of the French Neo-Renaissance and other cognate modes, English Neo-Gothic did not quite disappear but was on the wane. Fewer and fewer patrons and builders opted for it, until, commenting on the newly erected small country house at Kolta in 1902, an anonymous critic could risk the plain statement: “*The English Gothic style, which our architects don't like.*”²³ This did not mean, though, that English inspiration had ceased to exist altogether. Other impulses would arrive from the island nation, which would show new ways to architecture in general and country house in particular.²⁴

²³ *Szálon Újság*, 7, 1902, No. 14, p. 9.

²⁴ I owe special thanks to Paul Stirton for the revision of this article.

Kaštiele v znamení „starých čias“. Stavby vidieckych sídiel v anglickom štýle

Resumé

V 40. rokoch 19. storočia rokov sa objavil nový typ vidieckeho sídla, ktorého najvýznamnejšími príkladmi sú Rusovce a Veľké Uherce. Svojimi cimburiami, vežičkami a hrotitými oknami pripomínali anglickú architektúru neskorého stredoveku. Vďaka ich pseudo-vojenskému charakteru ich možno označiť aj ako hradovité stavby. Tento štýl mal samozrejme pôvod v Anglicku, kde zámok vo Windsore poskytoval univerzálny vzor, dobre známy po celej Európe. Aristokrati, páni aj prostí cestovatelia v tých časoch v čoraz väčšom počte navštevovali Anglicko, kde sa stretali s novým trendom. Anglický architektonický vkus okrem toho propagovali aj anglické vzorníky. Tento záujem o architektúru bol súčasťou „anglománie“, ktorá zachvátila Kontinent v neskorom 18. a ranom 19. storočí a zasiahla aj širší stredoeurópsky región. Pre výstavbu vidieckych sídiel bolo kľúčové sprostredkovanie anglického vkusu cez Rakúsko, keďže tak kaštieľ rodu Zichy-Ferraris v Rusovciach (1841 – 1845), ako aj Keglevichov kaštieľ vo Veľkých Uherciach (1845 – 1850) navrhli rakúski architekti – Franz Beer, resp. Alois Pichl. Je však zaujímavé, že obe stavby boli postavené už skôr a v 40. rokoch 19. storočia boli iba predstavované bez závažnejšej zmeny svojho základného tvaru a pôdorysu. Ich interiéry sa honosia bohatstvom práce v dreve v podobe zábradlí, obkladov stien, drevených stropov s visutými článkami, to všetko v neogotickom slohu.

Ďalšie vidiecke sídlo, kaštieľ v Parchovanoch (druhá polovica 50. rokov 19. storočia), je nepravidelnejší a menej formálny. Zahrnuje aj verandu

s gotickou arkádou pripomínajúcou architektúru Benátok. V tom čase kniha *Stones of Venice* od Johna Ruskina spopularizovala benátsku gotickú architektúru a ľahko mohla ovplyvniť parchovanských stavebníkov. Nádyh Benátok a viac než len nádyh pevnostného štýlu vidno na ďalšej stavbe podobného typu, vidieckom sídle Esterházyovcov v Galante (cca 1860), ktoré navrhol peštiansky architekt Antal Weber. Mohutná veža, primerané vyjadrenie ideálu malebnosti, tu mala aj symbolický význam ako pripomienka moci a rodovej histórie.

Medzi rokmi 1840 a 1870 boli prvotnými nositeľmi anglickej architektonickej inšpirácie vidiecke sídla. Avšak niektoré ich typické črty našli cestu aj k iným stavebným typom. Železničné stanice v regióne hornej Tisy, a zvlášť stanica v Košiciach, postavená medzi rokmi 1857 a 1860, sa podobali chalupám v anglickom štýle so slabým nádychom hradného štýlu. Pevnostné prvky sa bežne uplatňovali na stavbách, ktoré mali vojenské konotácie, ako boli väznice a kasárne. Pôsobivú stavbu tohto typu možno vidieť v Komárne, tzv. Dôstojnícky pavilón (1858 – 1863).

Po roku 1870 sa veci začali meniť: anglické sa malo postupne nahradiť francúzskym, gotika neorenesanciou. Novozbohatlíci možno pokladali anglickú gotiku za príliš „feudálnu“, zatiaľ čo renesancia mala prítlačivosť štýlu, ktorý sa dal spájať s predstavami slobody jednotlivca a racionálneho myslenia. V dôsledku toho čoraz menej patrónov a staviteľov uprednostňovalo anglicky inšpirovanú neogotiku.

Preklad z angličtiny D. Bořutová